

REMARKS

In the Office action, claims 31-33 were rejected as anticipated by Lader '313; and claim 34 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Lader in view of any one of five additional references. This amendment accompanies a Request for Continued Examination.

Claim 31 is amended to recite that the powder is negatively tribocharged by a component constructed of a material that gives up electrons to the powder; wherein powder particles that are negatively tribocharged by the component are also negatively corona charged during a spraying operation. Lader '313 teaches use of corona discharge of a polarity that is opposite the tribocharging polarity (see col. 5, lines 32-34.) This is because the corona effect is used to pre-treat or condition the tribocharging surfaces to neutralize charge build-up on the tribocharging surface. Lader also specifically states that the corona field is not used to charge the powder (col. 6, lines 19-21.) Therefore, Lader '313 cannot anticipate nor render obvious claim 31. Also, as noted in the Office action, Lader does not disclose any of the claimed materials of claim 34. New claims 35-38 recite additional aspects of the invention and no new matter has been introduced (see page 12, lines 5-10 and page 21, lines 26-35.)

As to claim 34, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, but will defer detailed comment pending further examination of the independent claim. However, Applicants wish to point out that the passage in Lader cited in the Office action is directed to PTFE and nylon, which are common materials with well-known tribocharging properties. Such a description of well-known properties of two specific common materials cannot render the use of these two same materials used together in a mixed material obvious for use as a tribocharging surface. This mixture is nonobvious for use in tribocharging because PTFE is a positive tribocharging material and nylon is a negative tribocharging material. Therefore, if used together in a tribocharging material, one would expect them to cancel each other out and be somewhat charge neutral. Moreover, Applicants disclose that the selected materials recited in claim 34 also exhibit excellent impact fusion characteristics. For example, Applicants discovered that the unconventional negative tribocharging materials such as, for example, Delrin AFTM (an acetal resin with PTFE content) not only functions as an excellent negative tribocharging material, but also results in excellent transfer ratios and reduced impact fusion compared with conventional negative tribocharging materials. PTFE is known to attract electrons (as

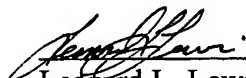
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a positive tribocharging material) and therefore it is completely counterintuitive and unobvious to use a material such as Delrin AFTM without adversely affecting negative tribocharging. There is no suggestion in the art of record to suggest that Delrin AFTM type material would be beneficial for negative tribocharging, other than by improper hindsight use of Applicants' own disclosure.

It is respectfully submitted that the application is in proper condition for allowance and that the pending claims are patentable over the art of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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